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SPECIAL
COOPERATIVE PROGRAM
EDITION INSIDE

Churches tightening security measures

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Get trained and be prepared. That's the message church security experts are stressing in these high-risk days of war and terrorist reprisals. It seems a great many Mississippi Baptist churches are listening.

While few churches in Mississippi have the many thousands of dollars it takes to hire a security force and install sophisticated cameras and other sensors, Mississippi Baptist church staffers in charge of security point out that common sense and a little planning go a long way. In order to protect security procedures in place at Baptist churches across the state and allow interviewees to talk freely, no churches or staffers are identified in this article.

"We didn't wait for the war to start. We started right after 9/11," said one church staffer, referring to the day of the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C. The planning process took on added importance when a state law enforcement agency notified the church that a just-completed study ranked the church as one of the top sites in Mississippi at risk for a terrorist attack.

The church's high Christian profile in a religiously and ethnically diverse community, along with its proximity to other prime targets and location along a major thoroughfare

that could be used for a quick getaway, all combined to make the church a favorable site for a terrorist attack, the staffer said.

Key people in the church's security apparatus have been trained in self-defense, the staffer said, and church members who are also law enforcement officers were called in for a meeting. "We wanted them to get to know each other, and to discuss with us what steps they thought we ought to take. It turns out we had a lot of officers who were members of the church, from county constable to U.S. marshal," the staffer said.

Those law enforcement officers are free to wear their sidearms when they attend church services, whether in uniform or plain clothes. "We see no reason why a trained law enforcement officer cannot have his gun with him in church," the staffer pointed out.

The staffer also said there are many security measures in place that church members wouldn't notice during a routine Sunday worship service.



SECURITY IN PLACE — In the wake of the Iraq War and threatened terrorist reprisals, Chuck Gallagher (left) and Curtis Davis of A-1 Security in Jackson divide their patrolling duties inside the Baptist Building and outside on the building's grounds which occupy nearly a block in downtown Jackson. The Baptist Building, which houses employees of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and Mississippi Baptist Convention agencies, has been on heightened alert since the war began. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"There is a lot of movement where security is concerned; people just don't know it's going on," he said.

Uniformed private security patrol the church's parking lots, the staffer said, and volunteer medics are always on duty when the church is open to the public. A color-coded alert system and two-way radios also speed up the response time when an emergency occurs.

Another Mississippi Baptist church recently paid for six people to attend a two-day terrorism seminar, said the staffer in charge of security at the church. They learned how to spot suspicious packages, profile unusual dress and mannerisms, and which close-in areas should be off limits to parking when the church is packed with worshippers.

(See Security, page 11)

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

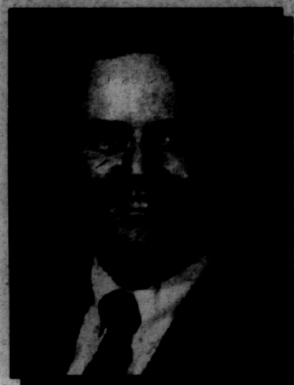
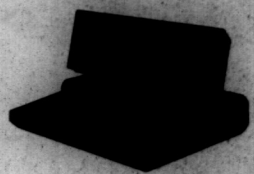
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Christians: called to divisiveness

If it seemed like a warm winter just past, there's a probably a good reason. Since the prospect of war with Iraq picked up speed late last year, there has been no shortage of hot air emanating from commentators, "experts," law-makers, other politicians, doomsayers, and any number of assorted fringe characters with a position on which to expound. All of a sudden, everyone's an expert on modern warfare.

Of course, journalists once again top all competitors for both the Most Shallow Questions award and the Least Understanding prize. A personal favorite: "Sir, aside from the fact that these fellows attended an Al Queda training camp in Afghanistan for nine months, how do you know they're terrorists?"

In the rush to be first with the most — and let's be fair, that's the nature of the business — more than a few reporters and news outlets have suffered from acute brain-to-mouth disengagement.

Most of the gaffes have been humorous, but some have not been so easy to laugh off. For example, one of the most mystifying statements of the war was made by someone who is not known for mis-statements and is seldom guilty of brain-to-mouth disengagement.

Pope John Paul II, the Holy See of the Roman Catholic Church in Rome, was quoted last week as saying he hoped the Iraq War would not "divide the world's religions."

Say again? With all respect due to the Pope, it sounds like someone needs to tell him the "world's religions" are already divided — and have been for the last 2,000 years. Those major religions have already been divided by the One who split time into before and after, who altered history forever, and who came to earth as the one true and living Son of the one true and living God.

I am thankful for the giving church. While some people think that the film, "Honey, I Shrunk the Offering," could be a documentary of their church, the truth is that many churches are giving churches.

God has used giving churches in many ways to influence my life. I am saved because of the giving of churches to spread the Gospel. I attended two outstanding Baptist institutions because of the cooperative giving of Baptists. I teach at Blue Mountain College because of the consistent giving of our Mississippi Baptist churches. In fact, without the giving of God's churches I would be unsaved, uneducated, and unemployed.

In 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Paul provided some insight into the characteristics of a giving church. One characteristic is that its members give cooperatively. Paul encouraged the church to give an offering which would be combined with offerings of other churches to meet needs in the body of Christ. He indicated that the churches of Galatia and the churches of Macedonia were giving. He urged the Corinthians to give also.

Now as then, cooperative giving is necessary to meet

I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! Do you think that I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against the other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. Luke 13:49-53 (NIV).

Division should not upset a born-again believer. Have you ever caused an entire group of partygoers to feel self-conscious because you refused to drink alcohol with them? Have you ever been criticized as a wet blanket because you asked to be dropped off at home while your buddies traveled on to the gambling boats? Have you lost good friends because you declined to provide cover for their immoral behavior? Have you been shunned by a family member after a confrontation over his/her lifestyle?

Have you ever been fired from a job because you wouldn't go along with a fraud? Have you had lies told about you when you wouldn't go along with unethical conduct? Have you been hurt at church because you chose to follow Jesus and not the power brokers?

If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, you've been divisive. Congratulations! Congratulations because,

as odd as it may sound to those who don't understand, you've been divisive for Christ.

When used properly, divisiveness can be a Christian's badge of honor. We have a lot of experience in the field. Let us therefore carry on by continually proclaiming the most divisive message the world has ever known — Jesus saves! Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

HISTORIC MOMENT — Southern Baptist Chaplains Cory Cathcart (left) and Command Chaplain Doyle Dunn (right) prepare to baptize Aviation Technician 2nd Class Sean Zahornacky on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). It was the first-ever, full-immersion baptism on the aircraft carrier. The baptistry was a container normally used to store bomb parts. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

GUEST OPINION:



The Giving Church

by Ronald Meeks
Associate Professor of Bible
Blue Mountain College

the vast needs of people. Cooperative giving allows us to preach the gospel globally. Cooperative giving allows us to help relieve hunger. Cooperative giving allows us to educate our young men and women in a Christian context. At the heart of a giving church is the willingness to cooperate with others to meet the needs of people.

A second characteristic is that its members give consistently. Paul urged the Corinthians to set aside or treasure money on the first day of the week for the offering. Some scholars suggest that the members were to set aside the money at home and have it prepared when Paul visited Corinth. Others suggest that the money was set aside at church when the peo-

ple gathered for worship. While the place where the money was set aside is debated, what is not debated is that they were to develop the habit of treasuring money consistently for the offering. Today giving churches are those in which the members give consistently. They recognize that the needs are ever present. Therefore, the giving church shares on a consistent basis.

A third characteristic is that the members give universally. This means the opportunity to give is for everyone. Paul wrote, "Let every one of you lay by him in store." In 1 Cor. 1:26 he acknowledged that not many wise, mighty, or noble were among the Corinthians. Yet, everyone could give. The Bible is rich with stories of giving. Some wonderful narratives

of giving are preserved in the Bible to show that those who have little can give worthily.

In the Old Testament a widow gave her last meager meal to Elijah, and God provided for her needs. In the New Testament a widow gave two mites out of her penury and her gift was recognized by Jesus. Other stories reflect that those who have much may give out of their wealth. David sacrificed abundantly as he served the Lord. Mary poured out a valuable ointment as an offering to Jesus. The offering plate should be passed down every pew, because everyone can give something.

A final characteristic of a giving church is that the members give liberally. "Liberality" suggests that Paul anticipated a gracious gift. Liberal giving comes from the consciousness that the Lords loads us with his benefits and showers us with his blessings. The generous giver sings, "Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold."

When God's people give from joyful attitudes and generous wallets, we experience what it means to be the giving church.

Crossover Arizona building high expectations

PHOENIX (BP) — The annual evangelistic effort surrounding this year's Southern Baptist Convention will offer opportunities to touch more than just the immediate Phoenix area with the gospel of Christ. The whole state is getting involved this year.

Crossover Arizona will bring block parties, door-to-door visits and other evangelistic efforts to the metropolitan Phoenix area June 14 — the Saturday before the June 17-18 convention. The following weekend, churches in other parts of the state will sponsor similar events.

Jerry Martin, state coordinator for Crossover Arizona and director of missions for Valley Rim Association in Mesa, said pairs of Arizona churches will partner with each other on successive weekends. Most of the national volunteers are expected for June 14, although the second weekend does give volunteers more options for both date and location.

"Here in Arizona we see it as a way to get us unified across the state on sharing the gospel," Martin said. "We know that will overflow into making a difference in the West."

Phoenix-area Southern Baptists are familiar with working together on evangelism efforts, having just completed a Strategic Focus Cities effort that has resulted in more than 11,200 professions of faith and 38 new churches since 2000.

Mitch McDonald, evangelism director for the Arizona Baptist Convention, said Crossover Arizona developed out of the effectiveness of that effort. "We knew that the convention was coming in 2003, and we began praying and thinking about that. It kind of

grew out of that discussion that this would be a follow-up event for Strategic Focus Cities."

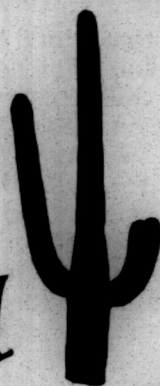
Crossover Arizona events will be similar to those of past Crossover efforts, Martin said.

"We'll be

Day and will be taking the opportunity of passing out small flags in public places and engaging people in conversations about their faith.

"I thought that was a great idea for being able to

Crossover Arizona



using block parties, random acts of kindness, prayer walking and door-to-door surveys. Some of the surveys will be saturation evangelism, and some of them will be other kinds of community surveys that the local pastor wants."

One of the "random acts of kindness" events — also known as Compassion in Action — will involve volunteers working with Mountain View Baptist Church, passing out free bottles of water and taking opportunities to share their faith on nearby hiking trails.

A "skate park takeover" planned by three Phoenix-area churches will involve a variety of ministries to skating and skateboard enthusiasts, volunteer coordinator Deb Wolfrey reported. Ministry opportunities include demonstrations, free videotaping of skaters, free adjustments, a live band and free food in a block party setting.

Several other churches have noted that June 14 falls on Flag

Day and will be taking the opportunity of passing out small flags in public places and engaging people in conversations about their beliefs," Wolfrey said. An Inner-City Evangelism workshop will also be held

June 10-13, and the North American Mission Board's Inner-City Evangelism team will participate in other Crossover events, Martin said.

Individuals or groups interested in participating in Crossover Arizona should contact volunteer coordinator Deb Wolfrey toll-free at 1-866-289-0469 or via e-mail at valleyrim@hotmail.com. While registration by May 1 is strongly encouraged, Martin said some individuals could be assigned to projects as late as the June 13 training session for Crossover events.

Crossover became an annual fixture of Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings in 1989, resulting in more than 23,000 professions of faith since that time. Here are the numbers of professions of faith recorded for the past six years:

- 1997, Crossover Dallas — 4,207
- 1998, Crossover Salt Lake City — 1,715
- 1999, Crossover Atlanta — 2,849
- 2000, Crossover Orlando — 1,213
- 2001, Crossover New Orleans — 1,348
- 2002, Crossover St. Louis, — 2,812

Crossover Arizona may be scheduled officially for mid-June when the Southern Baptist Convention convenes in Phoenix, but a multi-church partnership organized through the Crossover Arizona effort already has recorded 18 professions of faith in Christ in the western Arizona town of Topock.

With the help of Corona Baptist Church in the Phoenix suburb of Chandler and additional volunteers from Las Vegas and Oklahoma, 145 volunteers working with Golden Shores Community Church on March 1 visited each of the approximately 900 homes in the community.

The door-to-door spiritual opinion survey was followed by an evangelistic rally that

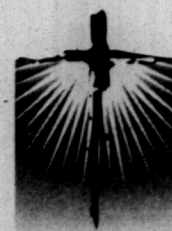
night, and attendance the following Sunday jumped from an average of about 105 to 170, pastor Bruce Daniel reported.

"I just wanted to knock on a few doors, but God had other plans," he said. "We believe that God is going to do a great work here."

The church picked up about 227 prospects through the effort and will follow-up through a new FAITH evangelism training effort.

The project is a result of a Crossover Arizona model that calls for partnerships between churches in the Phoenix area and a church in another part of the state — in addition to volunteers who will join the Arizonans from other parts of the country.

In most cases, the two congregations will work together on June 14 in metropolitan Phoenix and the following weekend on a similar project on the other church's home turf in the Arizona countryside.



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THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

Record

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Camp celebrates 75 years

When most of the country was in the Great Depression, Southern Baptists began a new kind of ministry. Camp Ridgecrest, celebrating its 75th summer this year, has a long and distinguished history, including an anniversary celebration weekend in late July sponsored by Camp Ridgecrest Alumni and Friends. More than 200 alumni are expected to attend. "Camp Ridgecrest began operating in 1929 as a two-week trial session," camp director Ron Springs said. "It was so successful that they immediately began planning for the 1930 season. Many of our camp families have made Camp Ridgecrest a family tradition, with second and third generations attending presently." That tradition is also true for Springs, who began working at the camp as a counselor 27 years ago. He spent his first summer at Camp Ridgecrest in Cabin 1, leading a group of boys that included Brad Johnson, now starting quarterback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, this year's Super Bowl Champions. "He was a 7-year-old in Cabin 1, where I was the counselor," Springs said. "It's great for me to see campers attending camp now whose fathers or mothers were campers at our camps when I first started here." Trey Davis, a former camper and staffer, now attending Wake Forest Divinity School, describes the 75th anniversary as a "big deal." "My grandfather was a camper there in the 1930s and '40s, and my father was a staffer in the '70s," he said. "It's the only place that each of the past three generations of my family has spent meaningful time. For more information about Camp Ridgecrest for boys and Camp Crestridge for girls, go to www.ridgecrestcamps.com, or contact Camp Director Ron Springs at ron.springs@lifeway.com.

Looking back

10 years ago

New Orleans Seminary, Southern Baptists' third oldest seminary, marks its 75th anniversary during the current academic year. Voted into being by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in 1917, it was the first theological institution to be created by the SBC.

20 years ago

At least five Mississippi Baptist churches along with dozens of homes suffered flash flooding recently. Damage to churches, none of them insured, ranged from ruined carpet and hymnals to an estimated \$100,000 at New Hope Church in Marion County.

50 years ago

Pat Clendinning begins his duties as educational director of First Church, Jackson. Clendinning is completing his Master of Religious Education degree at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth.

LifeWay to assist men's ministries

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — To nurture a visionary men's leadership, LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention has released *Drawing Men to God: Men's Ministry Manual*, with practical instruction for starting or strengthening men's ministry. In a how-to guide, LifeWay's Sid Woodruff illustrates a step-by-step process that churches can use to build a prayer-based, Christ-centered men's ministry. *Drawing Men to God* helps create experiences for men that seamlessly integrate and implement evangelism, discipleship, ministry and missions.

The guide offers direction in such key areas as:

- Identifying and meeting the needs of men.
- Developing a purpose statement.
- Preparing leaders.
- Organizing ministry around purpose.
- Preparing men for a mature relationship with God and ministry work.
- Celebrating God's victory in changing men's lives.

Drawing Men to God also includes tools for organization and administration, charts, a sample survey, purpose statement guidelines and ideas for getting men involved.

CP (COOPERATIVE PROGRAM)

CP is a special designation in our Baptist life. It seems as though, in our day and age, we are driven to reduce institutions and organizations to a handful of letters that identify them. For example: countries become USA or GB, and we still refer to the former USSR; colleges become MC, BMC, WCC, USM, MSU, or DSU and we usually know what they mean; and then in church life we have FBC, SBC, SS, DT, MBC, and CP. Now, if you have been around Baptist life very long, you are able to figure out these designations.

More and more our publications refer to CP and it seems our folks understand it less and less. What is CP all about? Well, for years the work of God had no unified method of funding programs, ministries, or institutions, and generally speaking, they struggled under the weight of debt or inability to be funded effectively to accomplish the task. In 1925 the Cooperative Program (CP) was voted into effect by the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention. It was a plan by which the smallest or largest church could participate in sending funds that would be channeled to every significant endeavor in Kingdom work. A dollar from Mt. Pisgah, or a dollar from First Baptist Church of Big City, would find its way to



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

places that would send missionaries, build churches, take care of needy children, or publish materials to be used to help disciples grow. No one was forced to do anything, but thousands of churches began to cooperate in order to accomplish together what none could do separately.

This plan of funding, coupled with our passion to reach people for Christ, enabled the Southern Baptist Convention to become the largest evangelical group in America. Undeniably, God has blessed this program of cooperation. Success cannot and must not be evaluated only by dollars. CP has allowed us to cooperate in building the largest mission force in the history of Christianity and strengthened the efforts to reach a nation for Christ. CP is more than just a means of gathering offerings.

• **CP means "Caring People"** — It is a fact that nothing will happen on the mission field or make a difference in our world if something has not hap-

pened in our hearts. All across Mississippi and all across our nation there are believers who meet in clusters every Sunday called churches. They have a sense of God at work in their lives to be a part of something that carries the Gospel, not just to their Jerusalem, but beyond to the Judea, and the Samaria of their world, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth.

In our churches there are literally thousands and thousands of people, young and old, rich and poor, that care enough to give. CP is literally a stream of worshipful giving that flows from caring people.

• **CP means "Circling Planet"** — Through our gifts we are part of a worldwide strategy to tell every person on the planet that Jesus Christ loves them and died for them. CP helps us to lift up our eyes on the fields that are white unto harvest and have a vision of reaching every nation and every people group in the entire world.

The goal of Biblical evangelism is not just to reach a community, or a state, or even our nation, but it is to blanket the world with the Gospel and to circle the planet with the Good News. No doubt there are other organizations and denominations that have a similar desire or vision; but, until now, no group of people has had such a significant plan and made such an impact as CP.

• **CP means "Complete Package"** — One of the marvels that has always been a part of CP is that it enables all of us to be a part of doing all of the work. When a church is a part of CP, they are involved in providing a complete package. There are so many dimensions to Kingdom life and so many ministries that are needed that no church can do everything.

CP provides for missions at home and around the world. It provides for educational support, whether it is in Christian colleges, Sunday School, Discipleship, Evangelism, or Stewardship training. It provides for music involvement, leadership support for pastor and staff, enrichment, and location. It provides for child care and involvement in social issues and ethical problems. It enables us to have camps and retreat facilities and it provides a channel for accumulated resources to be used long beyond our lifetime through the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. It is the lifeline for Seminary training and for food distribution to the starving. It provides for the Gospel to go behind prison walls and it helps to tear down walls of separation.

• **CP means "Crisis Prevention"** — Now, I am referring to the fact that while Cooperative Program dollars continue to inch upward, the percentage of dollars sent through the Cooperative Program of total church income continues to inch downward. For Southern Baptists (convention wide), the percentage is about eight percent, while Mississippi continues to give over 10% of church offerings through CP.

There are a variety of reasons why the percentage of giving has gone down. Some have diverted funds into other mission endeavors and some have retained the funds for local mission projects. In some cases there is a lack of understanding as to what the Cooperative Program is or does. Whatever the reasons, it is a matter of concern if we are to maintain our strength and effectively carry out the task that the Lord has given us.

As you celebrate this marvelous experience that God has provided for us called CP, I would encourage you to prayerfully consider what you do and what the Lord would have you to do to be a part of something that is truly God-given, heaven-empowered, and world-wide in its impact.

Worker: Southern Baptists ready for opportunities in postwar Iraq

PLANO, Texas (BP) — Messengers of God's love are ready to minister in Iraq as the Lord creates opportunities in difficult times, a Southern Baptist worker said from Jordan during a live videophone uplink with the Dallas-area Prestonwood Church on March 30.

Identified only as "Brother John" for security reasons, the worker said he and others are "look-

ing for ways to be ready to go in when the Lord opens the door," whether after western Iraq is secure or at the completion of the war.

Southern Baptist personnel hope to make a difference as humanitarian relief workers in refugee camps on the Jordan-Iraq border and are scouting locations for relief work in southern Iraq, he said.

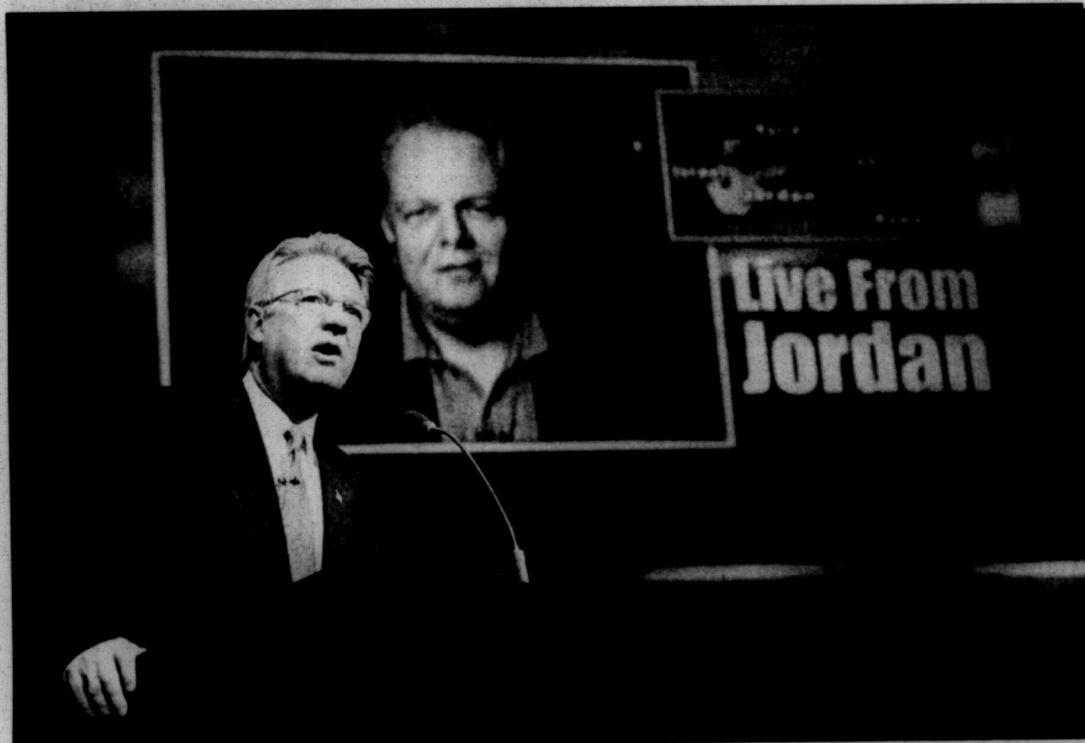
"It is so important for Christians to be there to bring a cup of cold water and living water as the Lord Jesus Christ flows through our lives into their lives," he said as the Muslim call to evening prayer echoed in the background. "Compassion empowered by prayer can change the world."

The worker asked that members of the congregation and other Southern Baptists pray that the "doorkeepers" of Iraq would allow relief workers into the country, and also that the people who have been suffering under the tyranny of Saddam Hussein over the years would be receptive to the gospel.

The live uplink between the worker in Jordan and Prestonwood, the home pulpit of SBC President Jack Graham, was the first live videophone conversation between a pastor and a missionary on the field. Graham said Iraqis needed to know "that God loves them and we love them."

Graham asked the worker to challenge the congregation to become involved in humanitarian and evangelistic efforts in Iraq. The worker replied that his challenge to the church was the same as God's challenge to the prophet Jonah.

"I hope God doesn't have to do to us what he did to Jonah," the worker added. "God is looking for willing hearts, that we will walk into terrible times, that we will walk into the grief, and as we see God's heart and walk in obedience to him we are going to see the same kind of result Jonah saw."



FIRSTHAND REPORT — Jack Graham, Southern Baptist Convention president and pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, moderates a live videophone uplink with an unnamed Southern Baptist worker in Jordan March 30. The worker said Southern Baptist personnel look forward to opportunities to conduct humanitarian relief efforts once peace is restored in Iraq. (BP photo by Mo Sadjadpour)

Son of slain missionary lauds father's vision

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Bill Hyde had a vision for establishing 3,000 churches on the Philippine island of Mindanao, the son of the slain International Mission Board (IMB) worker said during chapel at Southwestern in Fort Worth on April 1.

"His vision was to see 3,000 churches on Mindanao," Steve Hyde said, "and I have no doubt that, through the legacy he has left and the people he shared that vision with, there will someday be 3,000 churches on the island."



FATHER COMMEMORATED — Steve Hyde, son of slain Southern Baptist worker Bill Hyde, speaks to students in chapel at Southwestern Seminary on April 1. An independent missions worker in Southeast Asia, Steve Hyde underscored his father's vision for 3,000 churches on the island of Mindanao. (BP photo by Matthew Miller)

"We need to be in places where the work is dangerous," Steve Hyde said. "We need to be in places where people have not heard the Gospel before."

Bill Hyde, age 59, a Southwestern Seminary graduate, was killed in a bomb attack at the Davao City airport in the Philippines on March 4. He and his wife Lyn had served with IMB for nearly 25 years.

Steve Hyde, who also attended Southwestern Seminary, said that on the day of his father's funeral in the Philippines the church was filled and people spilled out onto the streets.

"The whole block was full of pastors [who] were impacted by the life of my father and they are even more passionate for the Gospel now," Hyde said. "So Satan made a big mistake by killing my father."

Hyde, age 31, grew up in the Philippines and is no stranger to the dangers that are often a part of a missionary's life. He recounted that when he prayed for direction about where God would have him serve as a missionary, he found himself praying for a place with "beautiful mountains and beaches."

God, he said, changed his direction.

"When I told people that God was calling me to [Southeast Asia], not one person said, 'Yeah, great. Go for it.' Everyone said, 'Are you sure?'"

Hyde and his wife Noit currently work to "equip the body of Christ" through the development of training materials and training programs for church leaders in the region. The couple began Words of Life Ministries in 1997 to help achieve their ministry goals,

which have expanded to include the production of radio and media programming.

"It's so exciting to be in that part of the world because God is doing such incredible things there," Hyde said. Hyde said that he has seen warfare at various times in Southeast Asia since arriving there, but that God had already prepared him for the situations he has faced.

The danger of missions became evident when he participated in the Southwestern's spring evangelism practicum in 1992, he said. He preached in Guatemala, where for the first time he had a gun put to his head.

"That same year, I went on another practicum to California and also had a gun drawn on me. The gunman said, 'Don't bring Jesus on my street.'"

Hyde encouraged students to be ready to go when God says "go," no matter where that place may be or how dangerous it may seem.

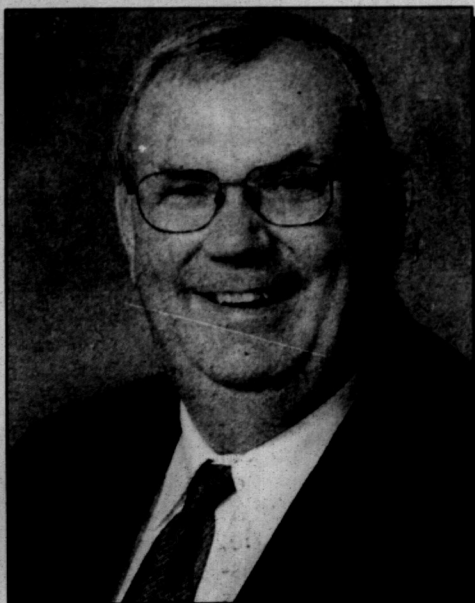
"I have often heard people say that the safest place you can be is in God's will," Hyde said. "It's safe as far as your eternal security, but if you're in God's will, most likely it's not a physical safe place. Very rarely does God call people to the most comfortable place on earth."

Though God is calling missionaries to difficult parts of the world, Hyde also stressed the eternal significance of the work.

"You will be doing what God wants you to do, spreading the love of Jesus in the hard places and the dark places so that someday they won't be hard, dark places. God is transforming places already, even with my father's death. Pastors are more passionate and more dedicated to share the Gospel."

Hyde also noted the adventure that accompanies a commitment to follow Christ wherever He might lead.

"When God calls you to go somewhere, do something now. Go. Go where God calls you to go. [It] may not be the safest place in the world, but it will be the best place, and it will be the place where God is going to use you in ways that you would never imagine."



Bill Hyde



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Barna: Christians up to date with technology

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Born-again Christians are just as likely as non-Christians to own the newest technological gadgets including home Internet access, a Barna poll studying America's hi-tech habits says.

The poll, conducted among 1,010 adults in January and February, reveals that 59% of Christians have home Internet access — the same percentage as non-Christians. Among other technologies such as DVD players and home satellite dishes, the percentage is virtually the same.

Fifty-six percent of all adults own a DVD player (56% of Christians, 55% of non-Christians), while 28% of all adults own a satellite dish (29% of Christians, 27% of non-Christians).

As technologies expand, Christians will face more moral choices, said David Kinnaman,

vice president of the Barna Research Group.

"The widespread adoption of technology creates new battlegrounds for moral choices to be made — battles that many Christians don't even realize they're waging," he said in a release.

The differences between Christians and non-Christians are indistinguishable because Christian leaders have not addressed the role of technology, Kinnaman added.

"[H]ow often do Christian leaders and teachers specifically address how to anticipate, interpret and respond to technological innovation?" he asked. "As Americans we are typically focused on the function that technology serves, but as Christians have we sufficiently considered what expectations — both good and bad — technology creates and satisfies among its users?"

"Without such a 'philosophy of technology' millions of believers are left defenseless against the tide of technologies that are changing the world in which they live," Kinnaman said. "How much more relevant and healthy would Christians be if they were both adept users of technology and were able to use those tools within the larger framework of their passion to serve Christ and to bless others?"

Among the study's other findings:

- The number of adults who own a DVD player (56%) has grown threefold since 2000, when it was only 18%.
- Satellite dish ownership has grown modestly, from 19% of all adults in 2000 to 28% today.
- 32% of all households say they own a home theater system.
- 28% of Americans say they have a mobile computing

device (laptops, pocket computers, Palm Pilots), up from 18% in 2000.

- Cell phones are owned by 65% of all Americans. In 2000, the number was 58%; in 1995, 26%.

- 36% of Americans own a digital camera.

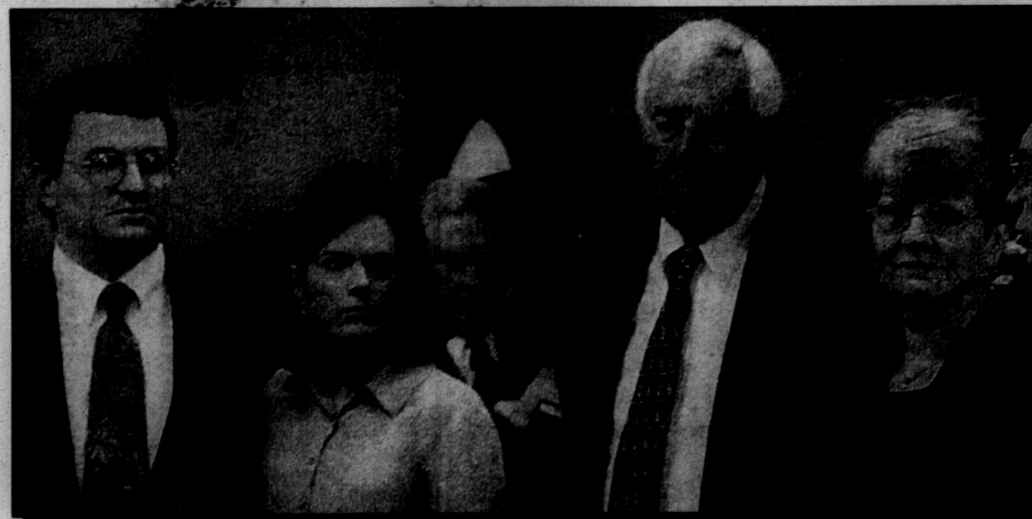
- The percentage of Americans with home Internet access has risen from seven percent in 1995, to 50% in 2000, to 59% today.

Editor's note: George Barna will bring his *Leading your Church Forward: The Barna 2003 Seminar*, to Ridgcrest Church in Madison on October 23. Co-sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the one-day seminar will highlight emerging trends in ministry, common leadership challenges, and several other topics. For more information, visit the Barna Research web site at www.barna.org, or call (800) 55-BARNA.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Recreation during King's Kids weekend



Brandon & Ginger Power and Louie & Ted Rutland



Gordon & Johnson

Immanuel Church, Hattiesburg, ordained Brandon Power and Louie Rutland as deacons on March 1. Pictured (from left) are Power with his wife Ginger, and Rutland with his wife Ted.

First Church, Mize, honored Keith Gordon with a recognition service for serving in the ministry for 40 years on March 9. Raymond Johnson presented a plaque to Gordon in honor of his service. Pictured (from left) are Gordon and Johnson.

Calvary Church, Columbia, ordained Allen Turnage to the ministry on Feb. 23. Allen currently attends William Carey College. Pictured (from left, front) are Noah Lafferty, (middle) Reuben McDowell, Jimmy Hill, Turnage, Archie Herrin, Mike Grenn, and (back) Trent Bilbo, pastor.

Society Hill Church, Oakvale, recently ordained Benji Lott as a deacon. Pictured (from left) are Tommy Broom, and Lott.

Smith Association held a "Kings Kids" weekend March 21-22. The weekend was a rally/conference for 1st through 6th graders, and included a

pizza blast, games, recreation, a talent show, and worship led by Jan Halford, Jackson, and Tony Martin, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The event, held at First Church, Raleigh, involved 15 churches, 173 children, and 79 adults. Eight professions of faith were recorded. Scott Walters is Associational Director of Missions.



Tommy Broom & Benji Lott



Allen Turnage Ordination, Calvary Church, Columbia

Professional Preschool/Children's Ministers Retreat

May 1 - 2, 2003

Patterson Place • Camp Garaywa • Clinton

Program leaders this year will be:

Dr. Steve Stone - Assoc Executive Director, Church Growth For MS Baptists
Sylvia DeLoach - National Missions Innovator For WMU, SBC

"Together Everyone Accomplishes More"

Thursday:

- 1pm Registration
- 1:30 Teambuilding study including DISC Personality Inventory With Dr. Steve Stone
- 3:30 Break
- 4:00 Teambuilding (Ropes Course Activities)
- 6:30 Dinner at Garaywa
- 7:30 Thinking Outside the Box with Sylvia DeLoach

Friday:

- 8am Coffee/juice
- 8:30 Thinking Outside the Box with Sylvia DeLoach
- 10:15 Brunch
- 10:45 Teambuilding--continued
- 11:45 Thinking Outside the Box--continued
- 12:30 Good-by

Bring the key leaders of your preschool/children's ministry team.

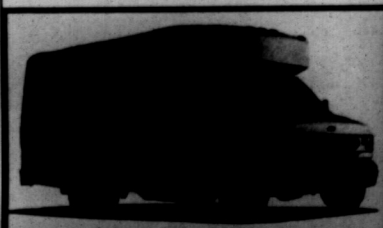
Registration for "Together Everyone Accomplishes More" is \$20. Motel type rooms at Garaywa's Patterson Place are available at the following rates:
• single \$40 • double \$35 • three in a room \$30 • four in a room \$25.

Send registration information and check to:
Robin Keels • WMU • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205
Make Checks payable to MBCB

Registration Deadline: April 15, 2003

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